

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 05676 171449Z

43

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 NSC-07 NSCE-00 SAJ-01

SAM-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-03

PM-03 DODE-00 L-02 FEA-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 DRC-01 SP-01

/070 W

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R 171231Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7954

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 5676

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR, US, JA

SUBJECT: U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN TYUMEN OIL RAIL PROJECT

REF: A. MOSCOW 4949; B. TOKYO 4571; C. MOSCOW 5243

1. SINO-SOVIET POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET DECISION TO SUBSTITUTE BAIKAL-AMUR RAIL LINE FOR PIPELINE TO BRING TYUMEN OIL TO PACIFIC COAST HAVE BEEN WIDELY REMARKED HERE AND IN JAPAN, AND IT SEEMS CLEAR FROM EMBASSY TOKYO'S REPORTING AND OUR OWN CONVERSATIONS HERE THAT GOJ IS TAKING THESE IMPLICATIONS WELL INTO ACCOUNT. WE HAVE ASSUMED THAT JAPAN WOULD CARRY THE BALL ON THIS ISSUE (REF A) AND THE U.S. COULD AVOID BEING DRAWN INTO THE CROSSFIRE BETWEEN MOSCOW AND PEKING.

2. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT IN PAST TWO WEEKS THE PRESIDENT OF GULF OIL HAS DISCUSSED POSSIBLE ROLE IN RAIL PROJECT WITH JAPANESE BUSINESS MAGNATES UEMURA AND NAGANO (REF B),
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 05676 171449Z

AND THIS DISCUSSION FOUND ITS WAY INTO SOVIET CIRLCES QUICKLY ENOUGH TO BE REPLAYED TO TREASURY UNDER SECRETARY BENNETT

(REF C). MOREOVER, WE SEE A NEW TENDENCY FOR SOVIETS TO CLAIM THEY WILL BUILD RAILWAY THEMSELVES, BUT WILL WISH TO OBTAIN CERTAIN RELATED EQUIPMENT FROM JAPAN (AND POSSIBLY U.S.). WE DOUBT THAT THE CHINESE WILL ACCEPT THE FINE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "PARTICIPATION" AND "SUPPLYING EQUIPMENT."

3. WE THEREFORE WISH TO RAISE THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE U.S. PERCEIVES A POLITICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TYUMEN OIL PIPELINE AND THE PROPOSED RAIL LINE AND IF SO, SHOULD THERE NOT BE SOME GUIDELINES FOR AMERICAN FIRMS BEFORE THEY REACH A POINT IN PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS THAT ENABLES THE SOVIETS TO DANGLE THEIR POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT BEFORE SENSITIVE CHINESE EYES.
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Message Attributes

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